

1      **CLAIMS**

2      1. A method for image retrieval using a statistical bigram correlation model,  
3      the method comprising:

4            receiving a plurality of images responsive to multiple search sessions;

5            determining whether the images are semantically relevant images via  
6      relevance feedback; and

7            estimating a respective semantic correlation between each of at least one  
8      pair of the images with a respective bigram frequency, each respective bigram  
9      frequency being based on multiple search sessions in which each image of the pair  
10     is indicated to be a semantically relevant image.

11  
12     2. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

13            assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based at least in  
14      part on the respective semantic correlation corresponding to the image; and

15            displaying only those images with a highest range of ranking scores.

16  
17     3. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising, responsive to a search  
18      session, dynamically updating the respective bigram frequency corresponding to  
19      two of the images.

20  
21     4. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein the respective semantic correlation  
22      is: (a) a positive correlation between two semantically relevant images; (b) a  
23      negative correlation between a semantically relevant image and a semantically  
24      irrelevant image; and (c) no correlation otherwise.

1       5. A method as recited in claim 1:

2           wherein the respective semantic correlation is performed offline or online  
3 to calculate unigram and bigram frequencies from relevance feedback information,  
4 the unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the  
5 multiple search sessions, the unigram frequency indicating that each respective  
6 image of the images is either semantically relevant to the session, semantically  
7 less relevant to the session, or a non-feedback image with respect to the session;  
8 and

9           wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
10 frequencies.

11  
12       6. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein estimating the respective semantic  
13 correlation further comprises:

14           associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
15 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
16 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
17 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
18 search sessions; and

19           wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
20 frequencies.

1      7. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein estimating the respective semantic  
2 correlation further comprises:

3            associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
4 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
5 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
6 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
7 search sessions;

8            determining a maximum frequency from a maximum value of the bigram  
9 and unigram frequencies; and

10            wherein the respective semantic correlation is further based on the  
11 maximum frequency.

12  
13      8. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising identifying, for each  
14 image obtained responsive to one or more search sessions of the multiple search  
15 sessions, a respective semantic support based on a similarity measure and/or the  
16 respective semantic correlation, the similarity measure corresponding to a  
17 similarity of a respective feature vector of the image and a search query  
18 corresponding to the session.

1        9. A method as recited in claim 1, further comprising:

2              identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search  
3 sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a  
4 similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity  
5 measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image  
6 and a search query corresponding to the session;

7              assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based upon the  
8 respective similarity measure, the respective semantic support, and a semantic  
9 weight; and

10             displaying only those images with a highest range of respective ranking  
11 scores.

12

13        10. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein estimating the respective semantic  
14 correlation is determined as follows:

- 15              •      $0 \leq R(I, J) \leq 1$  [if is true in all cases]
- 16              •      $R(I, J) = R(J, I)$  ; [if is true in all cases]
- 17              •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 18              •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 19              •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) > 0$  :  $R(I, J)=U(I)/T$  ; or
- 20              •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) > 0$  :  $R(I, J)=B(I)/T$  ;

21        wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency,  $U(I)$  is the  
22 unigram frequency of image  $I$ ,  $T$  is the maximum frequency,  $R(I, J)$  is the  
23 correlation between image I and J.

1      11. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein each respective bigram frequency  
2 is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the method further  
3 comprises performing the respective semantic correlation offline by:

4                (a) initializing all unigram and bigram frequencies to zero;  
5                (b) clustering search sessions with a same query into groups;  
6                (c) calculating unigram counts within a group;  
7                (d) updating unigram frequencies ;  
8                (e) updating bigram frequencies;  
9                (f) repeating operations (c), (d), and (f) for all session groups;  
10               (g) setting all negative unigram and bigram frequencies to zero; and  
11               (h) calculating each respective semantic correlation based on results of (a)  
12 through (f).

1      12. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein each respective bigram frequency  
2      is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram count of  
3      image  $I$ , and wherein the method further comprises performing the respective  
4      semantic correlation offline by:

5            (a) initializing  $C(I)$  to zero (0);

6            (b) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for every session in a group such that:

7                   $C(I) = C(I) + 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant in a session;

8                   $C(I) = C(I) - 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant in a session; and

9                   $C(I)$  is unchanged otherwise.

10                (c) repeating (b) for every image of the images;

11                (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

12                (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

13                   $B(I, J) = B(I, J) + \min\{C(I), C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

14                   $B(I, J) = B(I, J) - \min\{C(I), -C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

15                   $B(I, J) = B(I, J) - \min\{-C(I), C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , and

16                   $B(I, J) = B(I, J)$ , otherwise; and

17                wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency, and

18                 $U(I)$  is the unigram frequency of image  $I$ .

1      **13.** A method as recited in claim 1, wherein each respective bigram frequency  
2      is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the method further  
3      comprises performing the respective semantic correlation online by:

4                (a) calculating unigram counts in a particular search session;  
5                (b) updating unigram frequencies;  
6                (c) updating bigram frequencies; and  
7                (d) updating each respective semantic correlation between each of the  
8      images based on results of (a) through (c).

1        14. A method as recited in claim 1, wherein each respective bigram frequency  
2        is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram count of  
3        image  $I$ , wherein  $U(I)$  is a unigram frequency of image  $I$ , wherein  $B(I,J)$  is a  
4        bigram frequency of image  $I$  and  $J$ , wherein a session group comprises a single  
5        search session, and wherein the method further comprises performing the  
6        respective semantic correlation online by:

7                (a) responsive to determining that there is a user log, updating calculating  
8        each respective unigram and bigram frequency according to data in the user log;

9                (b) responsive to determining that there is not a user log, initializing each  
10       $C(I)$  and  $B(I)$  to zero (0);

11                (c) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for the single search session such that:

12                           $C(I) = 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant;

13                           $C(I) = -1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant; and

14                           $C(I) = 0$ , if  $C(I)$  is a non-feedback image;

15                (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

16                (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

17                           $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

18                           $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

19                           $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , or

20                           $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

21        wherein  $I, J$  are two images, and  $B(I,J)$  is their bigram frequency.

1       **15.** A computer-readable medium for image retrieval using a statistical bigram  
2 correlation model, the computer-readable medium comprising computer-  
3 executable instructions for:

4             receiving a plurality of images responsive to multiple search sessions;

5             determining whether the images are semantically relevant images via  
6 relevance feedback; and

7             estimating a respective semantic correlation between each of at least one  
8 pair of the images with a respective bigram frequency, each respective bigram  
9 frequency representing a probability of whether two of the images are  
10 semantically related to one-another based on a co-occurrence frequency that each  
11 image of the two images was relevant in a previous query/feedback session.

12  
13       **16.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, further comprising  
14 instructions for:

15             assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based at least in  
16 part on the respective semantic correlation corresponding to the image; and

17             displaying only those images with a highest range of ranking scores.

18  
19       **17.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, further comprising  
20 instructions for, responsive to a search session, dynamically updating the  
21 respective bigram frequency corresponding to two of the images.

1       **18.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein the respective  
2 semantic correlation is: (a) a positive correlation between two semantically  
3 relevant images; (b) a negative correlation between a semantically relevant image  
4 and a semantically irrelevant image; and (c) no correlation otherwise.

5

6       **19.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15:

7                  wherein the respective semantic correlation is performed offline or online  
8 to calculate unigram and bigram frequencies from relevance feedback information,  
9 the unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the  
10 multiple search sessions, the unigram frequency indicating that each respective  
11 image of the images is either semantically relevant to the session, semantically  
12 less relevant to the session, or a non-feedback image with respect to the session;  
13 and

14                  wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
15 frequencies.

16

17       **20.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein estimating  
18 the respective semantic correlation further comprises instructions for:

19                  associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
20 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
21 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
22 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
23 search sessions; and

24                  wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
25 frequencies.

1  
2   **21.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein estimating  
3   the respective semantic correlation further comprises instructions for:

4                 associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
5   unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
6   semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
7   unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
8   search sessions;

9  
10               determining a maximum frequency from a maximum value of the bigram  
and unigram frequencies; and

11  
12               wherein the respective semantic correlation is further based on the  
maximum frequency.

13  
14   **22.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, further comprising  
15   instructions for identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more  
16   search sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support  
17   based on a similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the  
18   similarity measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of  
19   the image and a search query corresponding to the session.

1      23. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, further comprising  
2 instructions for:

3            identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search  
4 sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a  
5 similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity  
6 measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image  
7 and a search query corresponding to the session;

8            assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based upon the  
9 respective similarity measure, the respective semantic support, and a semantic  
10 weight; and

11            displaying only those images with a highest range of respective ranking  
12 scores.

13  
14      24. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein estimating  
15 the respective semantic correlation is determined as follows:

- 16        •      $0 \leq R(I, J) \leq 1$
- 17        •      $R(I, J) = R(J, I)$  ;
- 18        •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 19        •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 20        •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) > 0$  :  $R(I, J)=U(I)/T$  ; or
- 21        •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) > 0$  :  $R(I, J)=B(I)/T$  ;

22            wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency,  $U(I)$  is the  
23 unigram frequency of image  $I$ ,  $T$  is the maximum frequency,  $R(I, J)$  is the  
24 correlation between image I and J.

1   **25.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein each  
2 respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and  
3 wherein the computer-executable instructions further comprise instructions for  
4 performing the respective semantic correlation offline by:

5                 (a) initializing all unigram and bigram frequencies to zero;  
6                 (b) clustering search sessions with a same query into groups;  
7                 (c) calculating unigram counts within a group;  
8                 (d) updating unigram frequencies ;  
9                 (e) updating bigram frequencies;  
10                 (f) repeating operations (c), (d), and (f) for all session groups;  
11                 (g) setting all negative unigram and bigram frequencies to zero; and  
12                 (h) calculating each respective semantic correlation based on results of (a)  
13 through (f).

1   **26.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein each  
2 respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  
3  $C(I)$  is a unigram count of image  $I$ , and wherein the computer-executable  
4 instructions further comprise instructions for performing the respective semantic  
5 correlation offline by:

6             (a) initializing  $C(I)$  to zero (0);

7             (b) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for every session in a group such that:

8                  $C(I) = C(I) + 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant in a session;

9                  $C(I) = C(I) - 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant in a session; and

10                  $C(I)$  is unchanged otherwise;

11             (c) repeating (b) for every image of the images;

12             (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

13             (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

14                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + \min\{C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

15                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{C(I),-C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

16                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{-C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , and

17                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

18             wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I,J)$  is their bigram frequency, and

19              $U(I)$  is the unigram frequency of image  $I$ .

1      27. A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein each  
2 respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and  
3 wherein the computer-executable instructions further comprise instructions for  
4 performing the respective semantic correlation online by:  
5           (a) calculating unigram counts in a particular search session;  
6           (b) updating unigram frequencies;  
7           (c) updating bigram frequencies; and  
8           (d) updating each respective semantic correlation between each of the  
9 images based on results of (a) through (c).

1       **28.** A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 15, wherein each  
2 respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  
3  $C(I)$  is a unigram count of image  $I$ , wherein  $U(I)$  is a unigram frequency of  
4 image  $I$ , wherein  $B(I,J)$  is a bigram frequency of image  $I$  and  $J$ , wherein a session  
5 group comprises a single search session, and wherein the computer-executable  
6 instructions further comprise instructions for performing the respective semantic  
7 correlation online by:

8             (a) responsive to determining that there is a user log, updating calculating  
9 each respective unigram and bigram frequency according to data in the user log;

10            (b) responsive to determining that there is not a user log, initializing each  
11  $C(I)$  and  $B(I)$  to zero (0);

12            (c) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for the single search session such that:

13               $C(I) = 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant;

14               $C(I) = -1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant; and

15               $C(I) = 0$ , if  $C(I)$  is a non-feedback image;

16            (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

17            (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

18               $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

19               $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

20               $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , or

21               $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

22            wherein  $I, J$  are two images, and  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency.

1      **29.** A computing device for image retrieval using a statistical bigram  
2 correlation model, the computing device comprising:

3            a processor; and

4            a memory coupled to the processor, the memory comprising computer-  
5 executable instructions that are fetched and executed by the processor for:

6                  receiving a plurality of images responsive to multiple search  
7 sessions;

8                  determining whether the images are semantically relevant images via  
9 relevance feedback; and

10                 estimating a respective semantic correlation between each of at least  
11 one pair of the images with a respective bigram frequency, each respective bigram  
12 frequency being based on multiple search sessions in which each image of the pair  
13 is indicated to be a semantically relevant image.

14

15      **30.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, further comprising instructions  
16 for:

17                 assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based at least in  
18 part on the respective semantic correlation corresponding to the image; and

19                 displaying only those images with a highest range of ranking scores.

20

21      **31.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, further comprising instructions  
22 for, responsive to a search session, dynamically updating the respective bigram  
23 frequency corresponding to two of the images.

1      **32.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein the respective semantic  
2 correlation is: (a) a positive correlation between two semantically relevant images;  
3 (b) a negative correlation between a semantically relevant image and a  
4 semantically irrelevant image; and (c) no correlation otherwise.

5

6      **33.** A computing device as recited in claim 29:

7                wherein the respective semantic correlation is performed offline or online  
8 to calculate unigram and bigram frequencies from relevance feedback information,  
9 the unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the  
10 multiple search sessions, the unigram frequency indicating that each respective  
11 image of the images is either semantically relevant to the session, semantically  
12 less relevant to the session, or a non-feedback image with respect to the session;  
13 and

14                wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
15 frequencies.

16

17      **34.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein estimating the  
18 respective semantic correlation further comprises instructions for:

19                associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
20 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
21 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
22 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
23 search sessions; and

24                wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
25 frequencies.

1  
2   **35.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein estimating the  
3   respective semantic correlation further comprises instructions for:

4                 associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
5   unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
6   semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
7   unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
8   search sessions;

9                 determining a maximum frequency from a maximum value of the bigram  
10 and unigram frequencies; and

11                 wherein the respective semantic correlation is further based on the  
12 maximum frequency.

13  
14   **36.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, further comprising instructions  
15 for identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search sessions  
16 of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a similarity  
17 measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity measure  
18 corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image and a  
19 search query corresponding to the session.

1      37. A computing device as recited in claim 29, further comprising instructions  
2 for:

3                identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search  
4 sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a  
5 similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity  
6 measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image  
7 and a search query corresponding to the session;

8                assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based upon the  
9 respective similarity measure, the respective semantic support, and a semantic  
10 weight; and

11                displaying only those images with a highest range of respective ranking  
12 scores.

13  
14      38. A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein estimating the  
15 respective semantic correlation is determined as follows:

- 16                •      $0 \leq R(I, J) \leq 1$
- 17                •      $R(I, J) = R(J, I)$  ;
- 18                •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 19                •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) \leq 0$  :  $R(I, J) = 0$  ;
- 20                •     if  $I=J$  and  $U(I) > 0$  :  $R(I, J) = U(I)/T$  ; or
- 21                •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) > 0$  :  $R(I, J) = B(I)/T$  ;

22                wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency,  $U(I)$  is the  
23 unigram frequency of image  $I$ ,  $T$  is the maximum frequency,  $R(I, J)$  is the  
24 correlation between image I and J.

1      39. A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the computer-  
3 executable instructions further comprise instructions for performing the respective  
4 semantic correlation offline by:

5                (a) initializing all unigram and bigram frequencies to zero;  
6                (b) clustering search sessions with a same query into groups;  
7                (c) calculating unigram counts within a group;  
8                (d) updating unigram frequencies ;  
9                (e) updating bigram frequencies;  
10               (f) repeating operations (c), (d), and (f) for all session groups;  
11               (g) setting all negative unigram and bigram frequencies to zero; and  
12               (h) calculating each respective semantic correlation based on results of (a)  
13 through (f).

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1   **40.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram  
3 count of image  $I$ , and wherein the computer-executable instructions further  
4 comprise instructions for performing the respective semantic correlation offline  
5 by:

6             (a) initializing  $C(I)$  to zero (0);

7             (b) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for every session in a group such that:

8                  $C(I) = C(I) + 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant in a session;

9                  $C(I) = C(I) - 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant in a session; and

10                  $C(I)$  is unchanged otherwise;

11             (c) repeating (b) for every image of the images;

12             (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

13             (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

14                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + \min\{C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

15                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{C(I),-C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

16                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{-C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , and

17                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

18             wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I,J)$  is their bigram frequency, and

19              $U(I)$  is the unigram frequency of image  $I$ .

1      **41.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the computer-  
3 executable instructions further comprise instructions for performing the respective  
4 semantic correlation online by:

5            (a) calculating unigram counts in a particular search session;  
6            (b) updating unigram frequencies;  
7            (c) updating bigram frequencies; and  
8            (d) updating each respective semantic correlation between each of the

9 images based on results of (a) through (c).

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1       **42.** A computing device as recited in claim 29, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram  
3 count of image  $I$ , wherein  $U(I)$  is a unigram frequency of image  $I$ , wherein  
4  $B(I,J)$  is a bigram frequency of image  $I$  and  $J$ , wherein a session group comprises  
5 a single search session, and wherein the computer-executable instructions further  
6 comprise instructions for performing the respective semantic correlation online by:

7             (a) responsive to determining that there is a user log, updating calculating  
8 each respective unigram and bigram frequency according to data in the user log;

9             (b) responsive to determining that there is not a user log, initializing each  
10  $C(I)$  and  $B(I)$  to zero (0);

11             (c) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for the single search session such that:

12                  $C(I) = 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant;

13                  $C(I) = -1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant; and

14                  $C(I) = 0$ , if  $C(I)$  is a non-feedback image;

15             (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

16             (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

17                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

18                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

19                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , or

20                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

21             wherein  $I, J$  are two images, and  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency.

1       **43.** A computing device image retrieval using a statistical bigram correlation  
2 model, the computing device comprising:

3              processing means for:

4                  receiving a plurality of images responsive to multiple search  
5 sessions;

6                  determining whether the images are semantically relevant images via  
7 relevance feedback; and

8                  estimating a respective semantic correlation between each of at least  
9 one pair of the images with a respective bigram frequency, each respective bigram  
10 frequency being based on multiple search sessions in which each image of the pair  
11 is indicated to be a semantically relevant image.

12

13       **44.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, further comprising means for:

14              assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based at least in  
15 part on the respective semantic correlation corresponding to the image; and

16              displaying only those images with a highest range of ranking scores.

17

18       **45.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, further comprising means for,  
19 responsive to a search session, dynamically updating the respective bigram  
20 frequency corresponding to two of the images.

1       **46.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein the respective semantic  
2 correlation is: (a) a positive correlation between two semantically relevant images;  
3 (b) a negative correlation between a semantically relevant image and a  
4 semantically irrelevant image; and (c) no correlation otherwise.

5

6       **47.** A computing device as recited in claim 43:

7                  wherein the respective semantic correlation is performed offline or online  
8 to calculate unigram and bigram frequencies from relevance feedback information,  
9 the unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the  
10 multiple search sessions, the unigram frequency indicating that each respective  
11 image of the images is either semantically relevant to the session, semantically  
12 less relevant to the session, or a non-feedback image with respect to the session;  
13 and

14                  wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
15 frequencies.

16

17       **48.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein the processing means  
18 for estimating the respective semantic correlation further comprises means for:

19                  associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
20 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
21 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
22 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
23 search sessions; and

24                  wherein each respective bigram frequency is based on a pair of unigram  
25 frequencies.

1  
2   **49.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein the processing means  
3 for estimating the respective semantic correlation further comprises means for:

4                 associating a respective unigram frequency with each of the images, the  
5 unigram frequency indicating that each respective image of the images is either  
6 semantically relevant, semantically less relevant, or a non-feedback image, the  
7 unigram frequency being based on relevance feedback to a session of the multiple  
8 search sessions;

9                 determining a maximum frequency from a maximum value of the bigram  
10 and unigram frequencies; and

11                 wherein the respective semantic correlation is further based on the  
12 maximum frequency.

13  
14   **50.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, further comprising processing  
15 means for identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search  
16 sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a  
17 similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity  
18 measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image  
19 and a search query corresponding to the session.

1      **51.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, further comprising processing  
2 means for:

3           identifying, for each image obtained responsive to one or more search  
4 sessions of the multiple search sessions, a respective semantic support based on a  
5 similarity measure and/or the respective semantic correlation, the similarity  
6 measure corresponding to a similarity of a respective feature vector of the image  
7 and a search query corresponding to the session;

8           assigning a respective ranking score to each of the images based upon the  
9 respective similarity measure, the respective semantic support, and a semantic  
10 weight; and

11          displaying only those images with a highest range of respective ranking  
12 scores.

13  
14      **52.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein the processing means  
15 for estimating the respective semantic correlation is determined as follows:

- 16        •      $0 \leq R(I, J) \leq 1 :$
- 17        •      $R(I, J) = R(J, I) ;$
- 18        •     if  $I = J$  and  $U(I) \leq 0 : R(I, J) = 0 ;$
- 19        •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) \leq 0 : R(I, J) = 0 ;$
- 20        •     if  $I = J$  and  $U(I) > 0 : R(I, J) = U(I)/T ;$  or
- 21        •     if  $I \neq J$  and  $B(I, J) > 0 : R(I, J) = B(I)/T ;$

22          wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency,  $U(I)$  is the  
23 unigram frequency of image  $I, T$  is the maximum frequency,  $R(I, J)$  is the  
24 correlation between image I and J.

1      **53.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the processing  
3 means further comprise means for performing the respective semantic correlation  
4 offline by:

5                (a) initializing all unigram and bigram frequencies to zero;  
6                (b) clustering search sessions with a same query into groups;  
7                (c) calculating unigram counts within a group;  
8                (d) updating unigram frequencies ;  
9                (e) updating bigram frequencies;  
10               (f) repeating operations (c), (d), and (f) for all session groups;  
11               (g) setting all negative unigram and bigram frequencies to zero; and  
12               (h) calculating each respective semantic correlation based on results of (a)  
13 through (f).

TREC2014

1      **54.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram  
3 count of image  $I$ , and wherein the processing means further comprise means for  
4 performing the respective semantic correlation offline by:

5            (a) initializing  $C(I)$  to zero (0);

6            (b) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for every session in a group such that:

7                   $C(I) = C(I) + 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant in a session;

8                   $C(I) = C(I) - 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant in a session; and

9                   $C(I)$  is unchanged otherwise;

10                (c) repeating (b) for every image of the images;

11                (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

12                (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

13                   $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + \min\{C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

14                   $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{C(I),-C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

15                   $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - \min\{-C(I),C(J)\}$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , and

16                   $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

17                wherein  $I, J$  are two images,  $B(I,J)$  is their bigram frequency, and

18                 $U(I)$  is the unigram frequency of image  $I$ .

1      **55.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, and wherein the processing  
3 means further comprise means for performing the respective semantic correlation  
4 online by:

5                (a) calculating unigram counts in a particular search session;  
6                (b) updating unigram frequencies;  
7                (c) updating bigram frequencies; and  
8                (d) updating each respective semantic correlation between each of the  
9 images based on results of (a) through (c).

1       **56.** A computing device as recited in claim 43, wherein each respective bigram  
2 frequency is based on a pair of unigram frequencies, wherein  $C(I)$  is a unigram  
3 count of image  $I$ , wherein  $U(I)$  is a unigram frequency of image  $I$ , wherein  
4  $B(I,J)$  is a bigram frequency of image  $I$  and  $J$ , wherein a session group comprises  
5 a single search session, and wherein the processing means further comprise means  
6 for performing the respective semantic correlation online by:

7             (a) responsive to determining that there is a user log, updating calculating  
8 each respective unigram and bigram frequency according to data in the user log;

9             (b) responsive to determining that there is not a user log, initializing each  
10  $C(I)$  and  $B(I)$  to zero (0);

11             (c) iteratively updating  $C(I)$  for the single search session such that:

12                  $C(I) = 1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as relevant;

13                  $C(I) = -1$ , if image  $I$  is labeled as irrelevant; and

14                  $C(I) = 0$ , if  $C(I)$  is a non-feedback image;

15             (d) updating each respective unigram frequencies as  $U(I) = U(I) + C(I)$ ;

16             (e) updating each respective bigram frequency of an image pair such that:

17                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) + 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) > 0$ ,

18                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) > 0, C(J) < 0$ ,

19                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J) - 1$ , if  $C(I) < 0, C(J) > 0$ , or

20                  $B(I,J) = B(I,J)$ , otherwise; and

21             wherein  $I, J$  are two images, and  $B(I, J)$  is their bigram frequency.